

PIETER VAN HUUSTEE FILM IN COPRODUCTION WITH NTR & INDIE FILM PRESENTS:



A film inspired  
by the book  
*The Little Prince*  
- Antoine  
de St Exupéry

# THE MIRACLE OF THE LITTLE PRINCE

A FILM  
BY  
**MARJOLEINE  
BOONSTRA**



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A film by **Marjoleine Boonstra**

A film inspired by the book *The Little Prince* - Antoine de St Exupéry

Trailer:

<https://vimeo.com/299256108>



World Premiere:

18 november, Tuschinski 1

A Pieter van Huystee Film Production

[www.pvhfilm.nl](http://www.pvhfilm.nl)

## Credits

Director	<b>Marjoleine Boonstra</b>
research	<b>Lies Janssen</b>
scenario	<b>Marjoleine Boonstra / Lies Janssen / Pieter van Huijstee</b>
cinematography	<b>Marjoleine Boonstra</b>
camera assistant	<b>Stef van Wijk</b>
sound	<b>Kees de Groot</b>
editing	<b>Menno Boerema NCE</b>
composers	<b>Harry de Wit / Mari Boine / Svein Schultz</b>
sound design	<b>Marc Lizier</b>
grading	<b>Michiel Rummens</b>
finishing	<b>Jan Jaap Kuiper</b>
datahandling	<b>Watse Eisma</b>
line producers	<b>Marty de Jong / Lotte Gerding / Céline Baggen</b>
Indie Film AS	<b>Carsten Aanonsen / Sarah Winge-Sørensen</b>
producer	<b>Pieter van Huijstee</b>
production coordinator NTR	<b>Astrid Prickaerts</b>
commissioning editor NTR	<b>Oscar van der Kroon / Marloes Blokker / Diana Tromp</b>

<b>Length:</b>	90/55 minutes
<b>Genre:</b>	Human interest
<b>International Sales:</b>	Films Transit, Jan Rofekamp
<b>Nederlandse distribution</b>	Mokum Filmdistributie

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## THE MIRACLE OF THE LITTLE PRINCE

### Logline

A documentary about the **passionate translators** of the book *The Little Prince* by Saint-Exupéry, who fight for the preservation of their endangered languages. *The Little Prince* is the most translated book in the world; in more than 375 languages. Why do people from very diverse cultures choose precisely **this book to keep their threatened languages and cultures alive? From Sami in the highlands of Samiland to Tamazight spoken on the desert planes of the Sahara. From Tibetan taught in exile in Paris to Nawat still spoken by a last generation in El Salvador.** Every translator has a dramatical story and motivation to translate this book. An inspiring human film which carries out the wisdom of the Little Prince.

### Synopsis

*A documentary about the passionate translators of the book The Little Prince by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, who fight for the preservation of their endangered languages.*

Next to the Bible, *The Little Prince* is the most translated book in the world. It has versions in over 300 different languages. Why do people from very diverse cultures choose precisely this book to keep their languages and cultures alive? From the night sky, where the little prince smiles at us on his star and where aviator and writer of the book Antoine de Saint-Exupéry felt most at home, this film lands in the desert. And, just like the little prince, this film travels from that desert around the world to meet several posthumous friends of the little prince on the way. People who make the inseparable connection between language, culture and landscape tangible.

In the desert, among the sand and stars, live writer Lahbib Fouad and his friend, the poet Omar Taous. For over 30 years they've been fighting for Tamazight, the Berber language that's officially the second language of Morocco, but that's barely written or read. The fact that the little prince talks with animals is commonplace in their culture.

In the land of the Sami, at the border of Norway and Finland, we meet Kerttu Vuolab. When she was young, she was bullied at boarding school because of her language and culture. After the tragic death of her younger sister, who drowned in the river near her home, she was even lonelier than before and she found comfort in *The Little Prince*. While attending university, she decided to translate the book into Sami.

The Tibetan translation is by Tashi Kyi and Noyontsang Lamokyab. Both of them live as exiles in Paris, cut off from their family, their landscape, culture and language. That language is menaced and purged by the Chinese.

In El Salvador Jorge Lemus is venturing on a translation next year into Nahuat, also called Pipil, an indigenous Aztec language. Today, it's spoken by only about 300 people after the Pipil natives were massacred on a large scale in 1932.

Through the air we connect these languages and cultures. With the words of the little prince we stretch a line across the world in which the notions of comfort and hope, that are so beautifully interlaced in *The Little Prince*, find their echo in the struggle of the translators and their friends. No matter how much their cultures differ, what connects them is that they are able to convince us that it is essential for people to be allowed to think, dream and speak in their native language.

## About the film

*The Little Prince* has been translated worldwide in more than three hundred languages and every year new translations are added. It touches something essential in people's hearts - in all cultures and in the furthest corners of the earth. In the book the little prince leaves his home, a star where he feels lonely. On a quest for friendship and love he travels from planet to planet. He meets people and animals, asks why they do the things they do and he never judges. Everybody in the book is lonely, such as the king who rules from his throne but has no subjects, or the conceited man who wants to be praised to high heavens, or the lamplighter who performs such a vital job. The little prince keeps moving on, in search of people he understands and who understand him so that they may be friends. Eventually he ends up on earth where a clever fox, and a snake as angel of death, help him to find what he seeks. In his innocence the little prince has stolen the hearts of millions of readers all over the world.

The film explores deeply the theme of friendship that is central to *The Little Prince*. In the film the translators form a duo with a dear friend who, just like themselves, have locked the little prince in their hearts. They are putting their lives in the service of language and culture. These duos reinforce each other's stories and presence. The story of Kerttu Vuolab, for instance, is very personal and emotional. The Moroccan Lahbib Fouad, the translator of *The Little Prince* into Tamazight, is a dedicated but also introvert and sometimes stubborn personality. His friend, the poet Omar Taous, is exuberance itself and he manages to seduce Lahbib to candour in no time. That kind of cross-fertilization makes the film all that livelier.

Each of the stories place different accents but taken all together they form an exchange of landscapes, languages and cultures. Together, in the spirit of the little prince, they form a warm, humane plea asking you to wonder what really matters in the world and in life. The film feeds a growing awareness that the care for and the preservation of what makes you feel at home is essential for your existence as a human being, essential for life on this planet.

In the film we let our main characters take us to their world. We take on the role of the little prince, who greets everybody full of curiosity and asks people at which station in their life they have arrived, and why they do what they do. Such as Omar, who imbues us with his love for the desert as the dromedaries roar off the delusions of the day on their way home. How terrific is it not when we can shed the materialistic cocoon in which we have satisfactorily shut ourselves in, so that we can, by breaking the shell, experience the desert like a newly-born bird. So that we can place ourselves in the language and the life of our main characters. So that we don't just visit the landscape, but really be there.

The first dimension consists of images in the sky, inspired by the thoughts of Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. They are accompanied by quotations from *The Little Prince*, read by the main characters of the film in their own language. Music in which resonate the sounds of the cultures that are in danger. A dimension that provokes wonderment and emotional confusion. At first you cannot do anything but let it come over you like a giant wave. As the film progresses the significance and understanding of what you hear and see increases. Not everything will immediately be translated.

The second dimension is making the acquaintance of the dedicated translators who convey the necessity of translation through their personal stories. If the language survives, then they will. We meet them in the landscape with which their language and culture is connected.

The third dimension is formed by the books of *The Little Prince* in Jean-Marc Probst's library. We will be landing there two or three times in the film. The wealth of books, languages and alphabets.

The fourth dimension I would like to introduce is looking. Images of people looking at you. People staring into the lens long, concentrated and unembarrassed; moving portraits that seem to look right through you. You look at them, but they look back even harder. The visual translation of the attitude of the little prince, his curiosity and his almost childlike amazement. What do they see and what do you see?

What the dimensions have in common is, just like the little prince does so well, touching your heart. I love aesthetic, technically perfect images of maximum quality and there will be plenty of them in this film. However, I will not shy away from less polished images, but make full use of coincidence when it happens. If you hobble along with your camera on a sledge in a temperature of 25° below zero you will not make perfect shots, but you can communicate the feeling of such a journey in freezing cold.

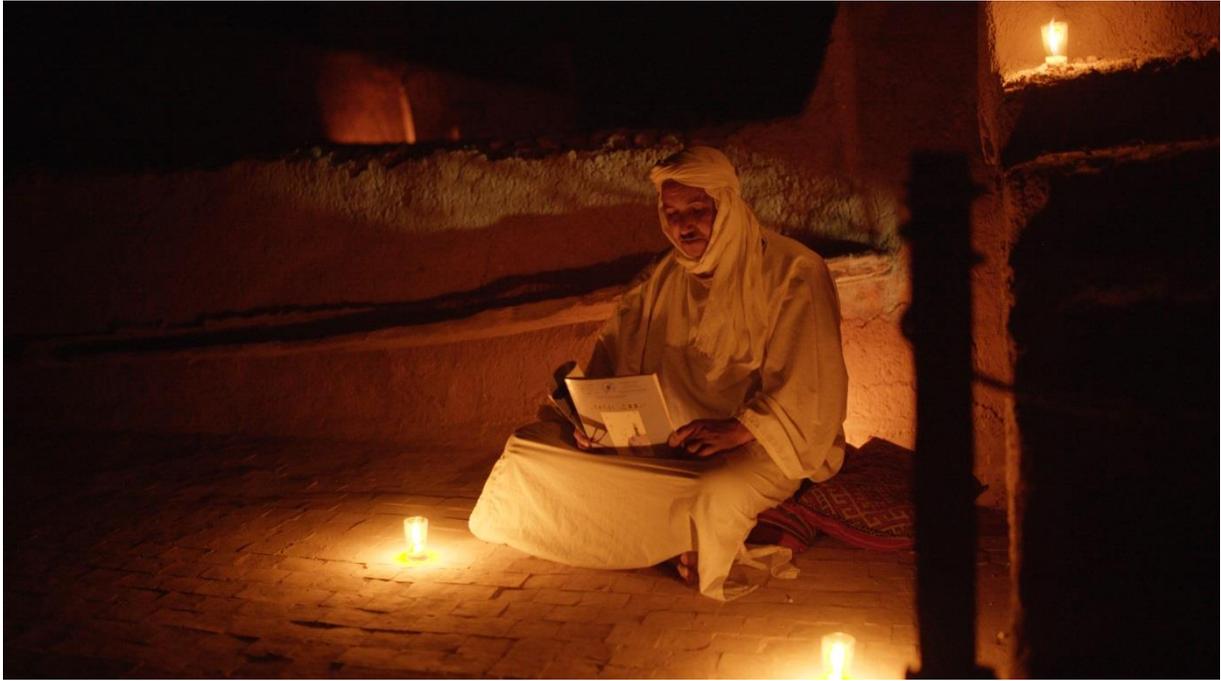


### **Marjoleine Boonstra**

Marjoleine Boonstra is a Dutch filmdirector and photographer with over 25 years of experience. Her documentaries always circle around the theme: what keeps mankind alive. In 2015 her first feature film KURAI KURAI, tales on the wind premiered. She combines a poetic visual approach with a com-passionate view on the world, which make her documentaries striking and touching.

Stills







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**FILM & TV**